NAQCC News

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1. SPRINT: Our sprint is this Tuesday evening, August 11 8:30-10:30 PM EDT (Wednesday 0030-0230Z).

Our special award certificate for this sprint goes to the one making the highest score in each division and being the youngest or oldest participant. That's two drawings and two awards overall, one to the youngest and one to the oldest participant. Anyone not reporting an age in their log submission will not be considered.

If you are entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on. Last month we welcomed K9XE, W9CPI, KC2VFT, VA3CWT, VA3PEN, K6WLM, KW3U, W2VV, W9WOC, WB5FKC as first time participants and/or log submitters.

Remember this is only a very brief overview of the coming sprint. Be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. JULY CHALLENGE RESULTS: The deadline for challenge submissions is still a couple days off as of the time of the posting of this newsletter. Barring a last minute entry, the winners of our popular poker challenge will be KE7LKW with 48 points and K3WWP with 44. I think W2JEK's soapbox comments sum up this challenge very well. He writes, "My first time at the poker challenge. Seemed simple once I got the hang of it." Yes, as with some of our challenges, it does take a bit of thinking to figure out. Once figured out though, those challenges seem to be the most popular among our members. We'd like to see all our challenges become even more popular as they are excellent incentives to get on the ham bands with CW which is what is needed to keep CW alive and well. It's definitely a case of "use it or lose it."

As always, full challenge info and results can be found here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: - Dennis N1IMW sends his apologies about the August 3 W1AW scheduled operation. He was unable to make the sked because the ARRL made some last minute change in some work that was to be done in the 'shack' at W1AW, and he was denied access to the operating position. However he was there for the other two skeds and worked several NAQCC members. If you missed out, perhaps it was because you didn't read each newsletter thoroughly as we urge you to do.

Here's a list of the members Dennis worked. If you would like a QSL card from W1AW, you must include a SASE with your request to ARRL, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111.

July 27 - KJ6EB (1685), K3WWP (0002), VE3MPQ (0201), N8ZYA (2279)
August 3 - Unable to operate.
August 5 - N9AKF (1252), W9NET (1004), K6BFA (1965), WA9KPZ (2805), WD9F (1648), N8XMS (0675)

Comments from Dennis about the August 5 operation: "My apologies to any memebrs I missed. I was unable to rotate my antenna at W1AW as another operator with me was on the same stack, he was on the 20 beam I was on the 40 so we agreed to leave it at 280 degrees from Newington which points to Oregon/Wash. My fist was a little shaky, not sure if the Bencher was sticking or I was just off my fist game that day. . ."

For those who may have missed out, and especially those of you out of range of a 40 meters signal from CT in the daytime, Dennis is going to put W1AW on the air again on Thursday September 17 at 1:30 PM (1730Z) on 20 meters.

All of us at the NAQCC thank Dennis for his consideration and efforts to make a QSO with W1AW a little easier for our members. It was entirely his idea to do so.

- We pride ourselves in keeping one of the most accurate and up to date membership lists of any club. Every few days we comb the FCC database via Excel macros to find changes of call or QTH for our members. Here's what Brian K2EOD (ex-KJ4GPW) said about this service after we sent him an updated membership certificate with his new call, "Thank you for the super fast service. I just saw the change on the FCC site yesterday! Semper Fi, Brian." And Stuart KI6J (ex-KI6MWN) says, "Hi I am member 3772. You found out about my new call about the same time I did. I'm sure my ticket isn't even printed yet. Thanks for the new cert. Can't slip nothing past the NAQCC!"

It's amazing to me how changeable and mobile our society is, especially since I've had the same address all my life and the same call (KN3WWP/K3WWP) all my ham life. There are generally one or two info changes each and every day on average. We appreciate those members who notify us of the changes, but not everyone does. While we can find call and QTH changes in the FCC database, a member notification is the only simple way to find out a change of email or address as those are not included in the FCC database. It seems that email addresses change most often of all the info. So if you want us to be able to keep in touch with you, please notify us when your email changes.

- Our donations of items for giveaways continue to grow, and we are going to have to grind our very busy schedule to a halt and decide how we are going to be giving away those items. You can always check the giveaways page in the main section of the web site to keep up to

date on current and past giveaways. To those of you who donated items, our sincere thanks. Please be patient about our deciding the best way to give it away. It just takes time with the very minimal staff we have at the NAQCC.

- We are about to put our plans for our October 5th Anniversary celebration into full swing. We'll soon be starting informational emailings to those of you who volunteered to help us out the week of October 12-18. Thanks to those of you who have volunteered. There's still time to add YOU to the list also. We have ops for all ten or our special event 1X1 calls to be used that week, but some call areas have only 1 op and could use more. Here are the number of ops for each call area: W1-4, W2-2, W3-5, W4-4, W5-2, W6-1, W7-2, W8-1, W9-2, W0-2. In a nutshell, all that is required of you as an op is to operate as you normally do, but use one of our special event calls instead of your own. You DO NOT have to be a hotshot CW operator. Any skill level from rank beginner to seasoned expert can do the job.

- Club President Tom WY3H has arranged for the club to operate from the submarine Requin stationed in Pittsburgh. Operation will be on August 13th. In case you missed it, here is a condensed version of the full info from our last newsletter.

Operators Tom/WY3H and his son Ethan/W3IRS, and also John/K3WWP will operate N3AQC (NAQCC and FISTS Club Station) as a special event station on August 13th from the submarine USS Requin roughly between 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. EDT (1400 - 1800 UTC). A special QSL card will be sent to all contacts. Operation will be near the QRP frequencies on 20 (14.060) and 40 (7.040) meters, CW only, of course.

- Don't forget our hidden call sign in the newsletter. So far, no one has found their own call sign, and the prize of 100 NAQCC QSL's donated by KB3XS remains available. So examine and read this newsletter carefully to see if you can find your OWN call sign, and let us know via **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** before the publication date (August 29) of the next newsletter. It will be obvious it is the hidden call sign from its out of context position and a mix of upper and lower case letters. The latest potential winner was N4KTL, but he did not find his call, so he is removed from any future consideration as a possible winner, as everyone gets one, and only one chance at the prize.

- It seems we just can't get much advance notice of hamfests for one reason or other, but things are different this time as we are giving a couple weeks notice. Tom WY3H and John K3WWP will be attending the Skyview Radio Society hamfest in Upper Burrell Twp. just northeast of Pittsburgh on August 23. See http://www.skyviewradio.net/2009.pdf for details and directions. We hope some of you from the local area will show up. We are not setting up a table for the NAQCC, but just visiting. Perhaps we can run into each other. If you do decide to come, send off an email and maybe we can arrange a meeting there. Tom and I have attended a couple of their regular meetings and even gave a demonstration on QRP/CW at one of them. This is one club that doesn't look down on CW as many clubs do. They strongly support CW use on the ham bands. In fact some members and the club itself are NAQCC members. The club sets up at many local hamfests, and we always have a good time with their members when we also attend those hamfests.

4. FEATURED AWARD OF THE MONTH: - The award that surprises me the most for its lack of interest is our Worked Members Award. This is usually a very popular award among all clubs. Ours comes in two flavors, Advanced and Basic. The Advanced award, we believe, is the most intriguing of all such club awards. We discourage simple number exchanging to earn the award. We encourage our members to get to know one another beyond just knowing what each other's number is. So we give different point values for different types of QSO's as

follows:

1 point for a QSO with someone before they became a member or for a member QSO that consists only of RST-QTH-Name-Rig-WX.

2 points for any contest or sprint QSO (this encourages contest operation because it is an excellent way to build CW proficiency).

4 points for finding out more about a member than the 5 basic items in a 1 point QSO. For example he was a pilot in WW II or maybe worked in TV or radio broadcasting.

5 points for working our NAQCC club station.

The 4 point QSO's are the idea we are most proud of, because it encourages rag chewing which does a lot to help keep the bands full of CW.

The Basic flavor is something we condescended to in order to try to build interest in our Advanced flavor. The Basic award is similar to other club's worked members awards. There is an exception. You may count a QSO with someone before they became a member. You must be a member at the time of the QSO, and the other person must be a member at the time you apply for the award.

So far we've issued no Basic Awards, and only the following Advanced awards with the highest point endorsement in parentheses:

0001 - K3WWP (1300)
0002 - KI4DEF (300)
0003 - KD2MX (200)
0004 - NU7T (400)
0005 - K4PBY (200)
0006 - VE3HUR (200)

As is evident, I love this award and am constantly adding to my totals, but I don't have much company in that. I hope it will change, and in fact I challenge you to get busy and give me some competition for the top points total.

As always, read and be familiar with the complete rules before embarking on earning this or any award.

Full NAQCC Awards info here.

5. THE NAQCC ELMER PROJECT - FROM K5DUZ and N3IJR: - From N3IJR/K3WWP - Karl sends the following: "Our elmer's are as follows, Dave KM4DB, Steve NU7T, Paul N0NBD, Tom WY3H, Karl N3IJR, Don WA3ZBJ, and Steve KA1ZFY. We have had no request for (help from any of these) elmer's at this time."

If you need help with anything ham radio related contact Karl and he will hook you up with an appropriate elmer.

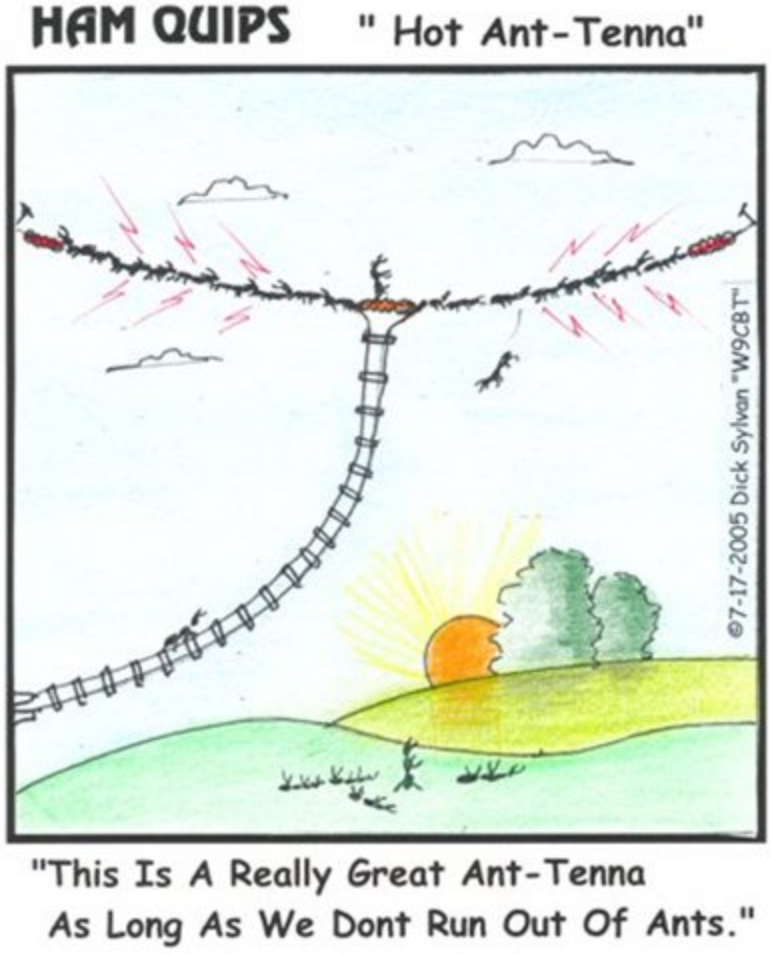
About the net recently, Karl says: "Net has not been too good, bad condx and lack of check in's. I average one or two when I can hear them. I think that most of the guys are using QRP and with band condx being what they are at times with my AF amp and filters I still have a hard

time hearing everybody. I don't think I miss too many, I have a pretty good RX on my Ten Tec rig."

Remember this is the ONE exception to our NAQCC activities. You can use QRO for our QRS Net since improving CW proficiency is so very important. All other club activities must be done with QRP. The net is Sunday evening at 8:30 PM EDT which translates to Monday at 0030Z on 7122.5 kHz.

If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix, email, n3ijr (1K)
Also see Elmer Project on the web site.

6. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH: Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.



7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

(disclaimer) Any views expressed here are those of the member submitting them, and may not be in agreement with those of the NAQCC.

- **From John K3WWP #0002** - I recently reached three milestones in what has become known simply as "the streak". For those of you who have never followed my activities, sometime in late August or perhaps early September of 1994 my good friend Eric (soon to become KB3BFQ) suggested I see on how many consecutive days it would be possible to make a QSO using CW, QRP, and very simple wire antennas. We then looked back in my log and found a QSO every day starting August 5 of that year (1994). As of today (August 4, 2009) I can say it's at least 5,479 days and still counting. You'll notice from the dates that's 15 years of daily QSO's. On August 1st I reached the 50,000 QSO mark in the streak when I worked K0JPL in the North American QSO Party. Also in the NAQP on August 2nd, I worked the 15,000th different station in the streak with my first ever QSO with W9TTT. I think this is an excellent way to show just how wonderfully efficient CW is, even with such a minimal setup as mine. You can find out more about the streak along with a ton of good useful CW/QRP info on my web site.

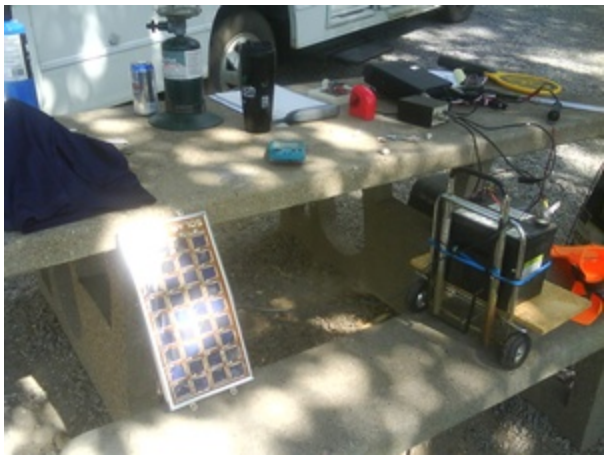
As I was posting the news items below, I found NU7T's intriguing about his sunspot minimum WAS. I emailed him to see what his starting time was for the minimum. I said I had a WAS from late May 2007 when I worked ND most recently, and the other 49 states since then. He didn't give me an answer as to a specific starting date for the minimum, but said that my WAS also qualified as a sunspot minimum WAS. I then thought about seeing if I also perhaps had a WAS from QSO's on days when the solar flux was below a certain value, perhaps 68 or so. I don't know if I'll have the time to figure that one out in the near future, but if and when I do, I'll report here and in my web site diary. Also it would be interesting to see if I have a sunspot minimum DXCC. That will be easier to figure - nope, if the minimum started in May 2007, I only have 90 countries worked since then.

- **From John KM6NN #2879 -** The weather was looking like rain but the grandkids were chomping at the bit to go camping and fishing. Now grandpa was thinking QRP radio more than fishing so I was all for going. As it happened the Bumble Bees were flying during the time we would be camping so it was a no brainer. It just so happens that K4RRO, Al McIrvin is a camp host at the Piney Campground located on Lake Kentucky about 45 minutes from my Clarksville, TN home. He talks about the campground a lot and is an active member of our radio club (Clarksville Amateur Radio Transmitting Society) This campground is a great place, located on the southern edge of Lake Kentucky. The camping sites are very well kept and plenty of trees made putting up my 40 meter dipole a snap. Set up was no problem and the antenna was up before my wife got back from setting up the grandkids for swimming. Next the radio and battery came out from my stash inside the motor home.

A check of the 40 meter band turned up special event station W9IMS, Bill calling CQ on voice. Turns out he was working a special event from the INDY 500. I know it was not CW but I had to take a chance. One call into W9IMS and he came back with a report of 57. Wow I was thinking my 5 watts and 40 meter antenna was on the money. After the QSO, I got down to business and started checking out my Icom 706 to make sure I was set up for the Bumble Bees.

A quick check and I found out why my call was answered so promptly. I was running 25 watts. Well it was the thought that counted. Ha... So backing down the power to 5 watts I set out on a Bumble Bee hunt. To my surprise almost all the signals were between 7029 and 7041. Not a problem as I did not have to hunt up and down the band much. First on the list was KC0PET calling CQ and KC0PET/BB. Richard BB # 68 was coming in great and his 559 was not hard to copy and my report was a 599. That was good to hear. Next was N3AO with a strong 599, Carter BB # 26 had a great fist and was quick to report his BB number from VA. Now a little up the band was NO4GA, the North Georgia QRP Club. A great signal of 599. Then away I went into the pile to pick out N0SS, Thomas running 5 watts on the same freq. His 599 signal was nice. Just in the noise on the same freq was N9NE, Todd BB # 91. His 559 was right on but a little week. Now I had been hearing K9DXA, Harry BB # 126. I tried calling him for quite a while before I was able to work him. His 559 and my 559 signal were weak but I was able to copy him. Sure wish I had KF4WK, Lewis' K3 with me. I am sure I would have had more contacts than I did. With a few contacts under my belt and a load of fun and contest experience it was time to quit.

I noticed that the XYL was calling my name for the fishing thing so you guessed it. Next stop was the shoreline and tying on hooks. Take care and see you on the air.



- **From Steve NU7T #434 -** On July 31, 2009 Jeff, KZ8E, squeezed a QSO with me into his busy day. Even though he worked overtime, he did not miss our scheduled QSO. This West Virginia contact brings my goal of WAS with 5 watts and a simple wire antenna at Solar minimum to fruition. This was the only scheduled contact. No West Virginia stations had been logged in two years. With my back to the wall and the spots returning, I succumbed to a scheduled contact. Good Luck everyone.

- **From John KM6NN #2879 -** Greetings again. The grandson, Michael wanted to go fishing

for a few days before he had to go back to school. You guessed it. Another chance to do some QRP in the field. We arrived at Piney Campground in Dover, TN and looked up Al Mc Irvin, K4RRO for the scoop on what was being caught in the area. After getting all the low down on the fishing, we started talking radio. The grandson was waiting in the motor home and was chomping at the bit to wet a line. But as it happened his grandpa was talking radio so he just had to wait.

After a short discussion about PSK 31 and Slow Scan TV, I was off to the camp site to set up my 40 meter antenna. I also made a 6 meter dipole just in case an opening came about. With the antennas up and the grandson in the wind fishing, I was off and running on the old Icom 706. I checked 6 meters and was not surprised to find no opening.

Next on to 40 meters and I was hearing QSO's from a lot of 2's and 8's with a few 5's thrown in. Most were weak but a few were coming in good. I heard AA5KV in QSO with someone I just could not hear. I waited a while for the end of the QSO and I gave AA5KV a call. No deal, he just could not hear me. I roll off and hear KF8SQ calling CQ. He is not real strong but I gave him a call anyway. No dice again. I am feeling a little low but I have great hopes as I hear AA5KV calling CQ again. He seems a lot stronger now and I tuned him in a little better. A call goes out and he comes back giving me a 569. John is in Shreveport, LA and gives me a FB on my QRP in the field. Now I am off and running.

I hear AE0G, Larry and K0MCR, Jim talking but they have a lot of QSB and QRM on them. Too much for me to get in a call. Then I hear WA3VYP calling CQ and I set up on him to call. Next go around he was GONE. I don't know what happened but he was not around. I hear W4PM with NN8N and they are hooking it on the band. Way to fast for me to send. Being an old Army Security Agency radio intercept operator, I can copy fast but my sending speed is not as good.

Then I hear KS3S calling. I get off a call and he comes back with my RST as 329. Wow, that is neat. Ray is in Newark, DE and he is having a hard time coping me because of a set of thunderstorms going through his area. He is on an Icom 756 Pro, running 80 watts into a wire in his attic. He comes back with a good luck on the QRP and have fun. Boy I sure am doing just that. Next I hear KM4LT calling. I give him a quick shout and great day in the morning he comes back to me with a report of 559, from Ed in Richmond, VA. Ed is working an FT 840 running 90 watts into a vertical, FB.

The grandson comes up and wants to know if I am going to go fishing? I thought that was what I was doing on the radio. Ha.... Oh well I guess it is time to go for now. Take care and take QRP into the field the first chance you get.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless they specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.